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Editors: EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
PHILIP BURNHAM

HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor;* C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor;* JOHN C. CORT, *Associate Editor;* JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager.*

The UN Assembly Opens Here

THE CONVENING of the United Nations Assembly in New York, the noticeable coolness of city onlookers when delegates whizzed by them with sirens whining, and the controversial matters introduced at the first few sessions have produced widely variegated reactions. Without pressing the contrast too far, it is well to remember now that the United States was never present at Geneva, while this time we are actually host to the delegates of fifty far-flung nations.

American participation and leadership mark a certain advance in international cooperation. But it is not possible so far to state with confidence how much is substance and how much shadow in the United Nations organization. On the negative side it is not possible, either, to limit the organization's ultimate potentialties simply because Russia more than the others has been utilizing UN for delaying action and as a means of pushing a well-defined, aggressive political program of her own. The framework, certain possibilities, are still there. The fact that the major powers, especially Russia, refuse to cede sovereignty to the point of relinquishing their veto on matters which concern them does not necessarily invalidate the UN as far as it does go.

In the deliberative Assembly, of course, the smaller nations predominate by sheer numbers. It is here that they have the opportunity to make their views heard. When they do not like the decisions of the Big Three, they can at least make statements for the record. No doubt they can obtain minor modifications in the decisions reached by the Security Council or by the Big Three foreign ministers. With agendas so complex it is hard to agree that this actually constitutes an effective forum before world opinion.

But whatever the Assembly's effectiveness in strictly political matters, indications are that in reviewing the work of the UN councils, committees and secretariat it can surely carry farther the wide range of international activities which once centered in the League of Nations. Witness the Social and Economic Council and its relations with the still-functioning International Labor Office, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNRRA and the Food and Agricultural Organization. Similar worldwide organizations for health, refugees and colonial trusteeships have also been discussed.

Many of these activities are aimed directly at the pressures which lead to war. They provide increasingly wider scope for the sort of international collaboration which has long been vainly hoped would keep the nations friends. Hope in the UN is well merited for its non-political potentialities alone. And even, to a degree, for its political possibilities until the world — or the powers that dominate it — can agree to something better.

The Brutes

THERE IS an Austrian railway station in a town called Pidding. It was at night, on October 10, that an UNRRA train came into this station carrying Polish repatriates from Italy and the Middle East on their way to Warsaw—at least most of the train entered the station, since a last car containing Red Cross parcels, and two "displaced persons" guards, had already "disappeared." The Poles were on their way home and it is impossible to know what was in their minds, but it does not require much thinking to know that they were tired, after long wandering and certain misery; that they were poor, because displaced persons always are poor. Before they got on the train they had been inspected again and again, counted, interrogated, told to wait, told to come back, interviewed, classified; they had their papers; they were going home — they felt themselves protected by the United Nations personnel in charge of the train. But in Pidding station the Poles and the representatives of the United Nations ran into the American 66th Constabulary Squadron. A detachment of this squadron boarded the train to inspect it for "contraband." American soldiers

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then took all army clothing from the refugees whether it had been issued by UNRRA or not; they took watches and cigarettes; they opened the refugees' kitbags with knives; they wounded two refugees with their bayonets. Mr. Hugh Gray of UNRRA reported: "These soldiers carrying out control appeared to think they were dealing with criminals rather than human beings and although I have seen many train controls I have never witnessed anything as brutal as this one. The damage to American prestige is incalculable."

That is one story. In the same issue of the New York *Times* (October 26) there is another one. This time, brutally, impartially and, of course allegedly, American soldiers joined with Polish and Jewish displaced persons in beating German civilians and in compelling them to "remove decayed flesh from the bones of corpses of concentration camp victims with their bare hands." The military government officer of Nuremberg has been suspended pending an investigation.

These are just newspaper stories; the Russians do things on a larger scale, our boys are our boys, so of course it would be absurd to worry very much about the stories. It would be wrong to say that we are specially brutal in our dealings with defenseless foreigners because there was Litchfield, after all, and nothing ever happened about that American concentration camp which was for Americans. We took that revolting business in our stride. Also we looked at the photographs of the corpses of the Nuremberg nazis which were published on the front page of many American newspapers (but not in the *Times*) and we bought the papers. So that perhaps everything is normal, running true to form—the new form of official brutality invented and imposed by the totalitarians. It is just that it is at last one world.

Lending and Befriending

SECRETARY BYRNES, in an interview given shortly after he returned from Paris, observed in one of those indirectly reported remarks that the State Department felt that the United States should grant loans only to those countries which did not feel the United States is trying to enslave them. This was a peculiarly plaintive and defensive way to expound what appears to be obviously and certainly a sound and friendly policy.

Recent news had given rise to the declaration. The Government had cancelled the $40,000,000 unexpended balance of a $50,000,000 credit assigned to Czechoslavakia. The reason for that particular action, Mr. Byrnes said, was because the Czechs had turned around and loaned the first $10,000,000 to Rumania, taking out for themselves a $700,000 cut as an administrative fee, and charging 6 percent interest. It was also recalled that at the Paris Conference, Mr. Vishinsky of the Soviet Union was applauded by Soviet satellites, including at this point, the Czechoslovakian, when he charged that the United States, in granting loans, is seeking the enslavement of foreign nations.

Foreign people and foreign governments can get loans theoretically from numerous sources. There are other governments besides this one to work on. Here in America, the Government handles these affairs through the Export-Import Bank, whose resources are limited and which, in turn, borrows money from and taxes private citizens, banks, etc. The World Bank, out of Bretton Woods, is different but its principal possible resources are the "money market" of Wall Street, La Salle Street, etc. Canada is considered the second most likely source for funds it wants to use. Then, all over where private men and firms might have money and credit to lend, countries can borrow money, subject to the various governments and laws.

In general, lenders have rights and, indeed, duties, to various continuing interests in the use their money is put to by the borrowers. Our Government, which is trustee of the funds it may lend, has the strictest sort of duty to examine and judge the expenditure of the credits it grants. This problem goes very deep in the heart of some very fundamental and philosophic problems of government, treated at length by intelligent men like Hamilton: the difference, for instance, between a government, officially as it must, committing men or resources or propaganda or moral support to a foreign government, or clique, or "cause," and, on the other hand, citizens and groups contributing about the same things, quite freely, in a private way.

A satisfying formulation of standards to govern loans to foreign nations and nationals by the United States would be hard to draw up. Mr. Byrnes's first mentioned reservation, that the recipient should not take a loan with the idea that we are trying to enslave him, is not legitimately debatable. Henry Wallace has spoken or written considerably about the possibility through loans to build up industrially backward countries, for their own material benefit and also for the good of all the world because they would become economically useful for the rest and also because they would grow powerful enough to fill up a power vacuum which always threatens peace. Desperately uneven physical standards of living tempt violence of all kinds, exploitation, resentment, and ultimately war.

Now, most dramatically, however, rank competition with the closed system of state communistic economy appears to be a proper principle for American lending. We have a perfect right,

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and it appears to us a duty, to try to make relatively free nations and relatively open societies capable of being prosperous without going into the Soviet system or otherwise throwing away the liberty they have been able to maintain. This is for their good, and, of course, for ours as well. We can be "encircled" by a closed economy closing around us just as effectively as any country can be "encircled" by a scattering of military and political bases and satellites around its borders.

Incitement to War

FOR many months, now, we have observed with a certain apprehension an increasing chorus of publicly Catholic voices indulging in utterances the effect of which is incitement to war between the United States and Russia. One of the most recent of these voices—that of Father John J. Cavanaugh, President of Notre Dame University—according to the press, urged the United States to "pile up armaments sky high and make bigger and better bombs" if our nation is to deal with countries repudiating the moral law. Of course it might be argued that this clergyman was exercising his right as a citizen to advocate adequate preparedness on the part of the United States, and he would be well within his rights to do so. Yet the tone of other quoted excerpts from his address goes much further. He is reported likewise to have said, "The only language such nations understand is force; the only argument that can convince them is power and more power. . . . That was the language of Germany and we spoke it with cannon and bombs from the air; it was the language Japan knew best and we answered them at Hiroshima."

The public effect—whether intended or not—of such pronouncements is indubitably that we should obliterate the Russian "menace" by force of arms. Now, critical as every Catholic finds himself forced to be of Russian communism and policy, is it compatible with his obligations as a Christian to advocate the desirability of what would unquestionably prove to be an incredibly bloody and incredibly destructive war? However sadly necessary they may be as means of defense, are bombs an effective means for ridding ourselves of bad philosophy? Assuming that a nation has a right to self-defense and granting that prudence requires adequate preparation for self-defense, is any Christian justified in a bellicosity which could conceivably help provoke armed conflict?

These are questions inevitably disturbing, yet inevitably provoked by the activities of those who filmly believe that the only proper vocation today is to "fight communism." All too often they intend the verb *fight* in its most literal sense, without realizing that an approach so utterly negative can produce only negative results and is of highly dubious morality. Communism, like many things in our world, deserves opposition of a strenuously vigorous nature, but it must be positive and must supply to the human heart and mind and body those material and spiritual lacks which themselves have lent communism its appeal. This whole question, the question of capitulation to violence, deserves much more exploration and reflection and less rhetoric than it is currently getting.

More River Valley Authorities!

THE APPOINTMENT of David Lilienthal, chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, to be head of the nation's new Atomic Energy Commission signalizes all that he has accomplished during the past dozen years by means of his justly famed regional "authority." His recognition at this crucial historical juncture again calls to mind the proposed major river authorities which have thus far been unable to surmount business and political opposition. But hope is not dead. The October 22 St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* reports that four Democratic Senators and two Democratic candidates for the Senate have joined forces to demand the creation of both a Columbia River and a Missouri Valley Authority. The *Post-Dispatch* calls upon the Republicans to do likewise: "The only question at issue is whether the next major valley development shall be performed in a manner that has proved in the past to be piecemeal, incomplete and wasteful, and that now is obsolete; or whether it shall be carried out in accordance with modern methods that have proved their validity in the Tennessee Valley. . . ."

Holiday Presents for Europe

FOR SOME months the best—in the sense of the largest—food package Americans could send to friends and relatives in Europe was that distributed by an organization generally known as CARE (Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe). This agency was set up by a large group of other agencies engaged in foreign relief for the express purpose of making possible the distribution of these food packages. They are Army surplus and provide over 40,000 calories apiece. Since the packages are already in Europe, delivery is considerable more expeditious than it would be for packages individually shipped from this country. CARE packages may be sent to France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Austria, Italy, Greece, and Germany exclusive of the Russian zone. Originally priced at $15 each, CARE has recently reduced its price to $10 per unit. Further details may be obtained by addressing this organization at 50 Broad Street., New York 4, N. Y.

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Denver and Maria Laach

H. A. Reinhold

THE DENVER LITURGICAL WEEK, October 14 through 18 of this year, is bound to mark a turning point in our national liturgical movement. Six years ago I wrote an enthusiastic report on our first national liturgical week in Chicago, which seemed to be the beginning of a new spiritual era in American Catholicism. It has been followed by annual "weeks" of varying value and success; but on the whole these weeks have achieved what they intended: they have focused the eyes of an ever-increasing number of clergy and laity on the liturgy.

The groundwork was laid by Dom Michael Ducey. He had studied the different liturgical movements in Austria, Belgium and Germany, and returned to this country with a deep conviction that this was the cause to which he must dedicate himself. He succeeded after many labors, one can say single-handedly, first to convince the Abbots of the American Benedictines of both Congregations that some kind of *semaines liturgiques* similar to the Belgian institution of thirty years' standing was needed in this country. And he was wise enough not to copy these "semaines" slavishly, but to give them that typical American flavor of direct action and practical approach which was inevitable, if he was to succeed.

The first "weeks," 1940 in Chicago, 1941 in St. Paul, 1942 in St. Meinrad's Abbey, 1943 in Chicago again, 1944 in New York and 1945 in New Orleans, followed the idea of spreading the basic notions of the liturgy and its implications for parish and daily life. These six years were not lost. The twentieth century Catholic on the whole knows appallingly little about the sacramental life of his Church, and sees less in his parish churches, above all in America. The American Catholic, with his proverbial obedience and strong sense of loyalty, accepts the liturgy as one of many obligations—nothing to wax enthusiastic about, a precious heritage of ages which reveled in them.

It is Father Ducey's merit to have driven a wedge into the hard shell of shallow observance with his persistent and courageous labors for his liturgical weeks. He and Dom Virgil Michel are the two Benedictine pioneers of a renascence which will tell only in a generation or two. Both men: the late Dom Virgil Michel, founder of *Orate Fratres* and creator of a genuinely American movement, and Dom Michael Ducey, instigator of its natural sequel and the organ for further propaganda, the liturgical weeks, were schooled in Europe. In their lives there towers the image of that man who shares with Dom Proper Guéranger and Cardinal Ildefonso Schuster the glory of having been the master of liturgy and monasticism: Abbot Ildefonse Herwegen, their equal in importance, ahead of them in deep historical intuition and consistency of thought.

*

Today his loyal monks of St. Paul's Priory in Keyport, New Jersey, sent me the notice of his long-expected death. It is hard to write now all the things that ought to be said. As one of his pupils—over a lifetime—and an oblate of his ancient Abbey on the lake, I have known him almost as well as his monks did. And yet, I feel I have no right to tell what they can do so much better, about the father on whom they have the first claim. But then, how can you write about the liturgical movement without at least mentioning him?

There were so many intimate traits which made the Abbot lovable and then there was the unfathomable depth of personality which spread awe and reverence about him, so that you had to see it all in the one living personality to understand his charm. Was he greater in his miter and crozier, singing the mysteries of Christ in the sacred liturgy as I have never seen any other pontiff do it: his clear, chaste and beautiful voice, the measured nobility of his gestures, the almost visible recollection and the complete absence of any affectation, suggesting a consecrated humanism, a sweetness of Christ which was almost tangible? Or was he greater as the father of his monks, the learned expert in monastic, liturgical and juridical history, the rule of Saint Benedict incarnate, the attentive host and listener, the witty yet profound *causeur* who kept his monks or any audience under an unbroken spell, hour after hour? He was as much at ease talking to an emperor as to his newest most humble lay brother, with a learned bishop as with a foolish young freshman. Not a tall man with an aquiline profile, but a slight man of virile grace and bearing who wore a miter without ever creating an impression of pompous vanity, a born prelate. His clear blue eyes, his high forehead, his expressive hands and his rapid step are things you never

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forget. With it all went a fine sense of humor with not a trace of frivolity, vulgarity or coarseness.

There is a story about Abbot Herwegen which gives an idea of the impression he made. He always wore the simple habit of the Benedictines and a plain silver pectoral cross. Yet one day when he entered Cologne Cathedral in a procession with the Archbishop, a sharp-eyed young cleric remarked: "There they are, His Eminence of Cologne and His Elegance of Maria Laach."

It is impossible to give even a rough idea of his tremendous influence in the many fields of Catholic life or to mention the innumerable monks to whom he gave a fuller, more truly Benedictine idea of monasticism. With his singular intuition of history he has probably inspired more historical theses in the minds of scholars than anyone who was not a professor of history.

The Church of the Fathers and the ages of creative liturgies, Roman and Eastern, the heroic age of his order, were his great love. It was he who put Dom Odo Casel, one of his own monks, in the path of research which brought to light the heart and core of a new and more adequate understanding of the liturgy, the concept of the sacraments as "cult mysteries"—strangely paralleled in England by Abbot Anscar Vonier's unearthing of a similar concept in Saint Thomas's theology. He it was who held the first liturgical week in Maria Laach in 1914, who inaugurated the famous collection "Ecclesia Orans" which gave the German liturgical movement its singular profundity and solidity. He was the cause which gave us that unique enterprise "Annals of Liturgical Research," and a number of other scholarly enterprises which were the inexhaustible well from which others drew water: Pius Parsch in his great movement of popularization in Austria, Switzerland and Germany; Dom Virgil Michel in his clear grasp of the American movement; the new French liturgical movement, the second wave after the impact of Solesmes had quieted down; the German youth movement which showed its liturgical fruit even in our American prisoner of war camps; and finally the liturgical movement in Italy, not to speak of the sister abbeys in Germany who accepted him as their foremost leader and emulated his monks in a new fervor, adding shades and variations to his great and monumental conceptions. And all of this was transmitted by his consecrated personality which in sermons and homilies rose to hymn-like grandeur. The secret of his vast influence seems to have been that from the gestures of his hands to the style of speech and the form of his thought everything expressed the perfect monk and abbot of Saint Benedict.

To have had a man to incarnate the ideas and aims of the rebirth of the liturgy is the pride of the German liturgical movement, the parent movement of our own. It prevented it from being beset with the curse of a lunatic fringe or of those externalists whose greatest worry is forever the lace alb, the correct pronunciation of Latin and the withdrawal of their own élite from coarse reality, something which has contributed so much to the general misconception that prevails among clergy and layfolk. We often regretted that he had no diocese to reform, but now that he is gone, I think we are glad that he was spared from being wasted in chancery routine, administrative troubles and frustrations due to the sheer inertia of his flock.

Our own American liturgical movement is indebted to him in a way which leaves it free from the slavery of pure imitation, because Dom Virgil Michel was enough of a realist to see that with all the elemental and basic agreement he felt with Abbot Herwegen, our land demanded its own version born of definite national and local necessities. We are deeply indebted to him for this. Abbot Herwegen, e.g., could not conceive of a place for the vernacular in the liturgy. To him the vague, complex and rebellious German mind and its "formlessness" needed the lucidity, constraint and majesty of Latin as an educating factor. Even in Germany Pius Parsch courageously took another road and today a number of German dioceses administer most sacraments in the vernacular and have as much of it in the Mass as is feasible, clamoring for more. After the first abortive attempt of the late Father Campbell of Halifax, N. S., to discuss this matter, in 1909, Dom Virgil was the first one to call for a greater measure of English in our liturgy. In many other ways he maintained his independence, above all in his firm stand on the social implications of the liturgy, his restless fight for the social encyclicals and his steadfast rejection of that troublesome misconception which tries to confuse the Kingdom of God with some "Sacred Empire," and Christ's Headship with a claim to monarchic forms of state life. Dom Michel was as good a disciple of Maritain as he was of Abbot Herwegen.

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Denver marked the first tentative steps into a new kind of liturgical realism. The time for fundamentals and generalities is over. Concrete tasks have to be mastered. The bishops, the clergy and the laity want to see what the liturgy means to do for every one of us. If we can't show this it will remain an esoteric pasture for esthetes, intellectuals and pious conventicles.

The great problem of our days is the restoration of our families which either have already become, or are on the verge of being, atomized. The Church combats birth control and fights further secularization of the family. Labor unions,

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church agencies and political parties lead an uphill fight for restoration of the family's economic, social and political climate. The inroads of the present plague of divorce are extreme. To conjure the "good old days" or the "average American family" or Judge Hardy movies is a poor way of conveying an ideal. Nor is a mere declamation of the idyl of Nazareth so effective—too little is known in detail of that life and few women dare "realize" in their minds the equation between themselves and Our Blessed Lady. Nor do the other equations, pious, idyllic, romantic as they are, have a particular appeal to young American couples and their offspring! I wonder whether the late medieval invention of this technique by the epigones of Eckhart, Suso and *"devotio Moderna"* was an all round blessing! Greater realism is needed.

The Denver liturgical week attempted this Christian realism from its loftiest definitions to its most common details. Once the partial notions of modern popular devotionalism are outgrown and the wholeness of the Church's sacramental cosmos is seen, this new realism becomes again possible. The realism of which I speak is one of faith. Faith in its fulness, with less emphasis on the mere defensive interest that we inherited than a full grasp of the supernatural as the great Fathers saw the new cosmos descended to earth in Christ. In this faith, certainly, all things are made new.

The mere pious verbiage on matrimony as a mystery in Christ and the Church is then discarded for a real grasp that man and wife are in a true, real relationship to each other as Christ and His Church, that marriage is a continuous bearer and channel of divine life, ministered by the other partner, as Dom Godfrey Diekmann showed. The elaboration of this reality took a whole day and six papers in three sessions. Pastors and married men and women showed by very definite examples the application of the great truths. So many Catholics who feel that their marriage, above the purely natural level, is nothing but an empty plateau with fences of commands and prohibitions all round, realized the enormous riches, the positive charge and the fertility of this plateau once the waters of the sacrament had irrigated it.

In my opinion Mary Perkins Ryan's direct and simple talk climaxed the week. When she spoke of her chores, her cooking recipes, her life as a mother, wife, housewife and writer, one perceived one life in which sacramental realism had come true. The complete absence of affectation and of popular pseudo-liturgies imported from Europe's peasantries or small-town bourgeois showed for once that you can be a modern American and liturgical without becoming touchingly weird and strange. The hundreds of Sisters and priests who heard the full doctrine and liturgical richness must have realized how much there is to do to free our teaching from that pseudo-claustral anemia which besets so much of our catechesis on this great sacrament. There is no doubt that for the first time the layman's part was the outstanding feature of this "week." There we have that articulate laity—putting us clerics to shame, for which we have clamored all along in order to prevent further clericalization of the American Church—the only hope for any Catholic Action. Married people all over the United States ought to purchase the proceedings of this first "penetrative" liturgical week which broke with spiritual isolationism. An even bolder program is planned for August, 1947, in Portland, Oregon. The further West we go, the more fresh air we seem to breathe. In Western eyes the East looks hidebound and crusted.

The young President of the sustaining organization, Father Thomas J. Carroll of Boston, and the secretary, a young priest out of Monsignor Reynold Hillenbrand's famous school, Father Patrick J. O'Connell, are a great promise that the liturgical movement in its "weeks" will carry out the basic principles of Abbot Herwegen's grasp of the liturgy as mystery—presence of Christ's redemptive acts—of Dom Virgil Michel's nearness to our times and Monsignor Hillenbrand's school: penetration, instead of isolation, withdrawal.

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Bourgeois Catholicism did not even improve the bourgeoisie. What good does it do if secular magazines in a mood which oscillates between irony and a sort of respect give a kind of left-handed publicity to careers of prelates or what they think to be medieval expressions of faith? Where do demonstrations, parades, resolutions and clamorings lead us? Is it really worth while to be regarded as a major pressure group in the tug of war with all the rest? What consolation do we get from (mostly arbitrary) statistics? What do we accomplish by backing any cause that has a Catholic label, without further investigation? Even if we succeed in attaining a certain standing, can we always go on feeding on others' grudging respect or even admiration, while the sacramental life has been thinned down to a trickle in a jungle of emotional growth all over the Church year?

Have you ever seen and heard a cathedral full of priests, sisters and lay-people sing an archbishop's Mass together as one man? In Denver it happened. In the evening hundreds chanted the psalms and hymns of compline together. Remembering your own parish church you will believe me: there is spiritual spring in the air right now in our own country.

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Pittsburgh's Power Strike

A company union finally succeeds in standing on its own feet

Charles Owen Rice

IN LABOR'S burgeoning days—the late thirties—the Utility Company which served Pittsburgh and surrounding territory set up a neat little company union (the Independent Association of Duquesne Light Employees) as a device to avoid the ugly labor trouble which other companies were having. The Utility Company which was called Duquesne Light Company & Associated Companies was wary of dealing with either CIO or AFL. The CIO Utility Workers were taking neighboring utility companies by storm. The AFL had a monopoly on construction work locally and were also interested in acquiring utility production workers.

It was a very good scheme and it had worked marvelously elsewhere. It worked perfectly here too, because the AFL and CIO never did get a look in. The CIO managed to organize one of four power stations belonging to the company, but eventually lost it. The AFL tried to organize two immense construction projects of the Light Company but the company and its independent union made an unbeatable team. They even smashed efforts of the AFL Building Service Workers to organize scrub women, elevator men and janitors in the utility's main office building.

There was one little flaw in the Company's plan; it did not stop labor trouble. The supervisors and foremen who helped the union get started feel rather hurt about that. The workers took seriously the statements of the independent union organizers that here they could have a real union of their own which would do wonders for them, and keep them out of the hands of the bad people running the CIO and AFL.

They got rid of their first president and elected a chap called George L. Mueller. Mueller was a slow-spoken man who had taken advantage of the Company's policy of encouraging and partially paying for higher education for its people. He got himself a college education and a degree in engineering. George appeared for a while to be a run-of-the-mine "independent" union official. He blasted the CIO as Communistic. He fiercely attacked the AFL as racket ridden, and pointed out that its International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers would give his members only secondary status.

But there came signs of trouble in paradise. The union put out a paper. As early as 1941 it began to say nasty little things about Company officials and began to run fighting articles. Then the lawyer who had organized the union was given his walking papers. Nicholas Unkovic is his name and he turned up, during the strike, working for the firm of lawyers which represents the Company. After this came a sit-down strike in the clerical department. The other officers turned on George and tried to impeach him, but he had them fired by the membership. He emerged stronger than ever. He got rid of another lawyer, Charles Seif, who in the present crisis turned up as urging George's members to join District 50 of the John L. Lewis Mine Workers. And about a year and a half ago there came a brief work stoppage which the court settled by recommending arbitration. The union won the arbiter's decision, but due to a lot of technical hugger-mugger they lost the effect of it.

Then in February, 1946, the entire city became conscious of this man Mueller. He announced that there would be a strike. He refused to negotiate any more because the deadline was passed and his members had authorized nothing but strike. The Mayor, David L. Lawrence, blew his top, but the strike came off. It was a strike with the lights on and in 19 hours it was suspended. It was rescheduled but in the meantime the company offered arbitration and the union was pressured into accepting.

Mueller at all times declared that his people did not like arbitration. They had had too much of it. When the arbitration was over he said that the members were not satisfied and would never go for it again. But observers put this down to talk and bluster and forgot all about George.

Around the end of June we began to hear from the union again. There was more talk of strike if the Company did not negotiate properly. No one paid much attention. After all the last time it had all fizzled out after a little excitement. Besides the deadline was not until August 31, two months off. All during August the newspapers played up the crisis hard but the citizens were not too interested. Nobody got steamed up. George and his union wanted quite a few things. It seems as if they had gone through all the union contracts in the world and picked out the best

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clauses from each one. The Company was not disposed to offer much of anything. They said that the last award exceeded Wage Stabilization directives and they would pay no more. Whether the contract permitted a strike at this point or not has been a moot question, but it was never tested in court.

The Mayor of Pittsburgh took a strong part in all negotiations. He would force Company and union to negotiate. He generated all the pressure he could to force them to get together. In the battle of statements and hand-outs and radio talks before the strike, Mueller did not do too well. He did not prepare his releases well and did not put over his case as clearly as was necessary. At times he appeared to be contradicting previous statements. Of course, a basic reason for this was that the employees of the Light Company have long memories and long, involved grievances. To tell their story they had to start back rather far and they had to explain a lot of history: company policy, company promises and so on.

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That brings us up to the strike itself. It began one minute after midnight Monday, September 9, 1946. It lasted for forty-five minutes in its first appearance. The City Administration got a temporary restraining order against the strike one minute before the deadline. Forty-five minutes later the union leader bowed to the court order. Thursday of that week he entered into negotiations with Leo T. Crowley, chairman of the board of Standard Gas and Electric, the utility's parent holding company. An arbitration agreement was signed. It was to be presented to the membership Friday, September 20. The injunction was to be withdrawn. Everything seemed to be all settled, everyone was happy and friendly. The Mayor felt wonderful and his brilliant City Solicitor Anne X. Alpern, who had presented the injunction, seemed like something only slightly less than a modern Joan of Arc.

There had been growls and rumblings over the injunction from both houses of organized labor who felt, very properly, that if this could be done to Mueller's union it could be done to anyone. No one paid too much attention to this because it all appeared quite academic. But then there came rumblings from the Independent Association. The members did not like the whole business. The president had been talking to lawyers who told him the injunction was illegal as all get out. It was against an anti-injunction act which the Mayor himself had lobbied through the State Legislature.

The day before the membership meeting, signs appeared on union bulletin boards telling the members to attend the injunction hearing as defendants and to shut down live equipment to be on the safe side. The meeting voted down arbitration about two to one. Mr. Mueller made his famous statement that the injunction was a "scrap of paper," without legal authority in any shape or form, that the members' souls belonged to God but their bodies did not belong to the Duquesne Light Company and Associated Companies.

Tuesday morning over a thousand members of the union stood in front of the City County building where the hearing was going on. They booed and cheered and got a little rowdy but there was no violence. A temporary injunction was granted. The union chief was asked to take back what he had said and call off the strike. He respectfully refused and the addled judiciary poured gasoline on the flames by sentencing him to a year in jail without bail.

That did it. The sporadic wild-cat strikes, which had been popping all over, threatened to become a general strike. Plain citizens who had no contact with unions and no love or understanding of them could see what this was. If Mueller could be put in jail like this anyone could be put in jail.

The only thing to do was to kill the injunction and get Mueller out of jail as quickly and neatly as possible. The city went before the court and asked that the injunction be dissolved. The request was granted. A mass meeting of the members was scheduled for that evening, Wednesday, September 25. Mueller was spirited out to the meeting. First they stood him up in court and he apologized for whatever he might have done in contempt of court and he promised to take an offer which the company had made and urge his members to accept it. The offer gave a five percent increase among other things. It was presented by Leo T. Crowley himself with the proviso that it was to be withdrawn if not accepted right out.

The members did not accept the proposal. When Mueller returned, they killed the charges against him anyway. He submitted the proposal to another membership meeting. He argued against it and the strike was still on in full force. The street cars and buses, whose operators were AFL members, stopped running. The drivers would not be called scabs. They were definitely on the spot.

Immediately after Mueller refused to push through the offer of Crowley, he and the union became targets for as neat a campaign of union-busting and maligning as I've ever heard of. All the papers jumped on him. Several radio stations barred him from the air waves. The belief held by these people was that Mueller was running a one-man show. He wanted glory and personal power. His people wanted peace. They wanted arbitration. The attempt was to undermine the morale of his people and to infuriate the general

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public against him. I think the results of that attempt are among the most interesting features of the whole unhappy controversy.

The union members held steadfast through nearly a month of concentrated abuse. Their side got very little hearing. Many sins against journalism went into building up the anti-Mueller legend. The general public simply refused to be stampeded. Several citizen committee attempts to promote back-to-work movements or recruit volunteer strikebreakers were miserable failures.

*

We had everything in this strike. We had an injunction. The jailing of a union leader. Promises extracted under threat of jail. We had combined radio and newspaper pressure. We had several citizens' committee deals. More recently we had a group of unionists attempting to secede from the union on strike. We had them cross over to District 50 of the Mine Workers. We had a quickie NLRB hearing and election. We had a so-called insurgent group holding a meeting at which arbitration was accepted by one-sixth of the members. We had attacks on the union and its leader by other union leaders. We had him attacked by public officials.

He won the NLRB election. Not enough voted at the rump meeting to make the vote for arbitration significant. Now a lot of people are beginning to suspect that George L. Mueller was not romancing all along when he said that his people were sick and tired of being pushed around, did not want arbitration and were willing to strike, and keep on striking until they got what they wanted.

Toward the end one newspaper began attempting to give both sides. Several radio stations also steadfastly refused to join the hue and cry against Mueller. One or two public officials have pointed out the Company's guilt. The absentee-owned Utility consistently refused to negotiate. It claimed that it would arbitrate only. Its officials would not sign a waiver of WSB regulations but proffered something "just as good."

Finally, the union did vote to arbitrate, 1,197 to 797, and brought the strike to a strange anti-climactic close, October 20. During the balloting George Mueller himself made no recommendation to the members either way. Afterwards he told reporters that he had found in Washington "a strong indication" that Wage Stabilization Board restrictions, to which company officials had held, would be discontinued by November 1. One of the union's objections to arbitration with the Company was thereby removed. In any case the strike has ended.

During the tie-up the people of Pittsburgh were not panicked. They bore the transportation stoppage until the street cars and buses went back into operation. They bore the lack of heat in office buildings and the occasional brief, localized blackouts. An admirable lack of hysteria.

There are lessons in this for everyone. For industrialists: not to fool around with "independent" unions unless they are prepared for trouble. For municipalities: not to put up with absentee ownership of their utilities. Better erect a public power plant if necessary. For the utility industry: to make up their minds to bargain with their workers through unions of their own choice. Pittsburgh is only the beginning. The one time scared and rabbity employees have hydrophobia. Management may get bitten. For "liberals" and labor people: all is not lost. The American people are inherently in favor of fair play. When the chips are down, they respect unions and they will no longer swallow any "American plan" boloney. For newspapers and radio: if they do not learn to be fair in industrial disputes they may lose the little prestige they have left.

What have we had in Pittsburgh? We have a company union which found itself. We have a union leader who has been very tough and single-minded. He weakened a couple of times but when his people bade him be strong he stiffened. We have had an absentee-owned utility which wanted a strike and got one. They wanted the strike to get rid of a pesky individual and his union which they themselves had created. We have had the unthinkable, a long utility strike. It has not wrecked the town. It has embarrassed a lot of people. It has made the strangest bedfellows. And, regardless of what happens tomorrow, we shall have no peace in our local utility until the company decides to get along with the union and forget about saving faces and beating people into line.

Communications

AMERICAN AUTHORS' AUTHORITY

Los Angeles, Cal.

TO the Editors: in justice to all writers and all guilds concerned in the current discussions about the proposed American Authors' Authority, immediate consideration should be given to several basic points not considered in Harry Binsse's provocative article of October 18th:

(1) The so-called James M. Cain plan is a rough blueprint, an outline for discussion. Various modifications will inevitably develop as the project is studied by the four guilds of the Authors League.

(2) When the proposal first came before the membership of the Screen Writers Guild, and was approved in principle with only seven dissenting votes, a special resolution was unanimously adopted "that there be no discrimination in the rights or treatment accorded by AAA to any piece of written material by reason of its content."

(3) Amusing though it may seem to Mr. Binsse, the plan is the legitimate outgrowth of very real "desperation" in the Hollywood scene. If writers are to recapture many

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of the individual rights now held by studios and by publishers, some channel has to be set up to this end. If licensing is to be preferred to outright sale, if separation of copyrights and reversion of copyrights are desirable objectives, writers in all fields will have to unite on a scale never attempted heretofore.

(4) In no sense has the AAA plan been projected as something with which to by-pass the Authors League of America. It could only be brought about by the combined action of the four guilds of the League and the individual members of those guilds.

Mr. Binsse, for some reason or other, chooses to focus on the trivia of the situation. He dismisses lightly several of the vexing situations which confront writers in the publishing market and he laughs the Hollywood problem away with the usual light-hearted observations about "desperate" Hollywood writers who earn more than $15,000 a year.

Are we to infer from this that THE COMMONWEAL, of all magazines, believes that there can be no serious matter of principle involved so long as the employee concerned is being paid enough? Or that there are *no* abuses in the publishing field worth the serious attention of the informed reader? The truth of the matter is that there are many abuses in the publishing field which cry to heaven for correction and there are grave problems in the development of the film industry that cannot be smiled away with pleasant jibes at Hollywood salaries.

Considering the usually modest nature of his investment, why *should* a book publisher share substantially in the film sale? And, in all ethics and all logic, why is it more desirable for a film studio to own *all* the rights it can lay hands on in one agreement, than it would be for the individual writer? Or for a radio station or a large advertising agency?

Surely, the inferences in logic are quite the opposite. Would you rather have five major studios in Hollywood as the corporate authors of several hundred stories or would you rather have several hundred writers each owning his own story, each with some continuing responsibility for and some identity with his own material?

Here, if THE COMMONWEAL is interested, is the $64 question. The studios, the publishers, the radio stations are not afraid of group control in this project. They well know that writers, of all people, are the most difficult people in the world to unite or to dominate. But they *are* afraid of individual control or individual responsibility in any form and so throughout the country we hear many cries of "dictatorship" leveled at the AAA plan.

Mr. Binsse, like Mr. Cain, makes many references to the relatively happy state of the members of the Dramatists' Guild. He wants to know why other guilds of the League do not achieve for themselves in their fields the same desirable licensing conditions by negotiating a basic agreement similar to that of the dramatists. The answer is simple. Individual agreements in each of these fields would be eminently desirable but the opposition in each of these fields is so strongly entrenched that it will take the over-all support of all writers in all fields to win the day in each particular field.

Mr. Binsse admits some justice to the current complaints of screen writers and radio writers but proceeds to argue that these are special crafts with special problems which have little relationship to the problems of dramatists and authors. As a member of two of the guilds concerned—the Dramatists and the Screen Writers Guild—I can assure the readers of THE COMMONWEAL that the basic problem is one and inseparable. We see it every day in the Screen Writers Guild where active members are often received on transfer from the other three guilds. It would be the height of folly, at this late date, to erect Chinese walls around each separate field of writers.

It is true that Mr. Cain, in the first of his articles, uses some vigorous language to describe his hopes and aims for this plan, a plan incidentally which represents the combined efforts of many writers. It was language designed to awaken writers to their particular problems. There was some talk of "a $1,000,000 kitty and a full-time tough mugg at the head of it" but no one should be unduly alarmed by the muscular quality of Mr. Cain's prose. He was trying to arouse writers and he certainly aroused them. But anyone who knows Jim Cain knows that he would be the first one to oppose anything in this country that even remotely resembled a literary czar. This program, like any program, has to be studied in terms of the conditions it seeks to correct—not in every word of every man (including myself) who chooses to make a speech or write an article about it.

Finally, the critics of the plan continue to discuss it as if it were a formula already fixed and determined. It is nothing of the sort. It is an approach to a problem, an approach that is deliberately fluid. It was kept fluid to permit and to encourage the widest amount of debate among the four guilds of the League. Many points are therefore still to be resolved. Some writers in Hollywood favor assignment of copyrights to the Authority. Some writers in New York prefer that the individual writer hold the copyrights. Others suggest a joint trusteeship between the individual writer and the Authority.

At no time has the AAA been advanced as a slick scheme of established writers to corral certain markets and to keep out new writers. On the contrary, this is one movement which wants every eligible writer to be part of it. True, there has been some discussion whether such an Authority should represent writers who are not in turn members of the four guilds. Yet here too no conspiracy is involved. If the four guilds choose to create such an Authority, it would seem only fair that the Authority should service principally those who establish it.

It is true that such an Authority would be expected to put up a united battle for better copyright protection, for uniform enforcement of its members' rights in all dealings with book publishers and film studios. But isn't this what all well organized guilds should do for their members? Mr. Binsse, of course, says that the League and the other guilds should have been busy about these matters in their respective fields "these last twenty years." Granting that we all might have been a bit more diligent in some of these fields, is that any reason for shutting us off from collective action now?

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Salutes are due Mr. Binsse and THE COMMONWEAL for having no part with the red baiting tactics of some opponents of the plan. Nothing but good can result from free and frank discussion of the plan on its merits—nothing indeed but improvement of the plan itself. But Mr. Binsse invokes the shades of rhetoric rather than reason when he sees only a power grab in a proposed procedure which would have the chairman of the Authority chosen by a board of four directors who in turn would have been elected by their respective guilds. He concludes—with one eye on that mythical million dollar kitty—that it's all just a political scheme, "a lulu complete with gravy train."

In reply, I would like to point out that just about the same arguments were advanced ten years ago against the formation of the Screen Writers Guild, except that no one was crediting us with a million dollar war chest. We were told that the totalitarians were moving in on the town through the Guild. We were told that so much concentration of power among writers could only lead to grave abuses. Yet the results here have been quite the opposite and, for readers of THE COMMONWEAL, who may be interested in the parallel, I refer them to my recent testimony before the Tenney Committee, which is printed in full in the *Westwood Hills Press* (Los Angeles 24), issue of October 11th.

Isn't it curious that people get so excited every time some writers get together? Especially, when they foregather in capitalistic enterprises clearly designed to put a bit more capital in the pockets of writers?

Somehow people never get quite so excited when book publishers, radio chains and film studios get together. I wonder why?

EMMET LAVERY, *President,*
Screen Writers Guild.

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN

Toronto, Canada.

TO the Editors: I have recently received THE COMMONWEAL of October 11, containing the article entitled "Christian Democracy In Spain." I was particularly interested in the foreword regarding what you term "the supposed 19th international meeting of the Catholic students organization, *Pax Romana.*" I attended that meeting as the representative of the Canadian Federation of Newman Clubs (of which I am now the President). However I do not write at this time in that official capacity, but merely as an individual.

I do not know where you obtained the information which led you to make the statements appearing in this foreword but they appear to be the sentiments of a group of delegates who went to Spain expecting to find just the sort of thing appearing here and consequently interpreted everything in the light of their prejudices. However I think you should know that there are a great many who disagree to a great extent with the conclusions thus stated, and would agree with my own personal observations.

In the first place Dr. Ruiz-Jimenez presided over the Spanish Congress because he had been elected to the Presidency of Pax Romana in 1939, at which time it was decided to hold the next International Congress in Spain. The President of Pax Romana has always presided over the Congress, following his election and thus his acting in that capacity at this particular time should not be open to any inferences.

With regard to Monsieur Bernard Ducret's leaving for Fribourg "without so much as taking leave," when he saw how things were going: I wish to state that M. Ducret told me, two days before the Congress started (and, incidentally, the approximate day of his arrival) that he intended to leave before the Congress was over as he had pressing work to do in Fribourg, from which he could not absent himself for very long. Moreover he did not leave from Salamanca but was some days in El Escorial.

Monsieur Ducret may have been the personal representative of the Abbé Grémaud but I recall that at an official meeting of the heads of the delegations (in Escorial!) he was asked to show his papers proving his official capacity as that personal representative. M. Ducret did not have those papers.

You emphasize the point that the Franco Government assisted with the financing of the Congress and did everything possible to propagandize the delegates. Financially the Government did assist, to the extent of one-quarter of the expenses, through the Institute for Cultural Affairs. But may I point out that I have attended this year two other international congresses in countries as remote as Peru and Czechoslovakia and that on both occasions the governments of these countries assisted the congresses in a financial way on a comparable scale and issued propaganda in a similar way. Also, whereas the President of Peru and the Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia received the entire delegation, General Franco did not. He only received a few individuals some days after the completion of the Congress.

The actions of Señor Sanchez Bella in South America were certainly open to question, as were the declarations of the Spanish press, and I do not attempt to justify either. However, I do know definitely that Dr. Ruiz-Jimenez, as well as the other executive members of Pax Romana, did everything in their power to counteract the effects of these influences . . . which were undoubtedly unfortunate. It was due in no small way to the courage and unselfish efforts of Ruiz-Jimenez that the Congress achieved a lot of good in spite of those who criticized and attacked him on both sides. It is a credit to the Catholic students of the world that, in spite of the time and the place and the unworthy efforts of some individuals, they could discuss and agree on such fundamental issues as the definition of the rights of the human personality in face of the totalitarian teachings that have such a regrettable influence in the world today. That this was so is in no small way due to Ruiz-Jimenez.

I do not feel that I can make any comment on the letter of Señor Jimenez Fernandez as I am not sufficiently familiar with the issues involved, but I can say that the Spain of today, with misunderstanding, hate and revengeful desires still living within her and the scars of her recent tragic history so livid upon her, has much

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to hope for from the loyalty, patriotic love and sincere capable efforts of a man like Ruiz-Jimenez who has already made untold sacrifices for the cause of Spain and his outstanding Catholic Faith; a man, of whom I am proud to say I am a friend.

I hold no brief for the Franco Government as such nor for the actions of the Church in Spain, for I fear the issues are too involved for any of us to pass judgment, but I do say that more harm than good will be done if we continue to criticize what we know so little about. If those of us who are fortunate enough to live in a true democracy will remember our obligations to be charitable and understanding and our duty to pray for our less fortunate brethren then we will be helping not hindering the rebuilding of countries such as Spain where, in spite of everything, the Catholic faith lives and burns in the hearts of millions. And above all we will be recognized by the rest of the world by, as Saint Paul says, "our love for one another." CATHERINE D. MCLEAN.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I should be grateful for the privilege of expressing publicly a word of comment on your editorial statement under the heading "Christian Democracy In Spain," which appeared in the October 11 number.

I was in Spain during the Pax Romana Congress, met many of its members, and dropped in at several of its sessions. You are right in stating that the Spanish Government utilized the occasion "as a means of winning greater prestige for itself in the eyes of the Spanish people." It would be surprising indeed if any group of politicians in any country would pass up such an opportunity for gathering a few kudos for themselves. I doubt, however, if there was much effort "to propagandize the delegates" and I am very sure that the essence of the whole matter was nothing other than an expression of gracious and generous hospitality on the part of a noble country.

You appear to think there was something political suspect and odious in the fact that Professor Ruiz-Jimenez, recently appointed director of the Institute of Hispanic Affairs, presided at the Pax Romana sessions. Inasmuch as he was elected president of that international society, he was merely discharging the duties of his office. I know this man fairly well, having been in his company in both the United States and Spain. He is a noble Christian gentleman and I think it is very good news that he has received a high appointment in Spain. Unless I misunderstand the implication of your words you think his acceptance of the post indicates a bad political character. But this is presumptuous and uncharitable. You would be nearer the mark, I believe, if you interpreted this as a sign of improvement in the political condition of Spain. If the Spanish dictator can enlist the service of men such as Ruiz-Jimenez, you may be sure the present régime has some real virtues along with its faults. The fact is indeed that the much-maligned "Francospain" is today a land of law and freedom as compared with most of the countries from the Pyrenees to the Balkans and Pripet marshes. ROSS J. S. HOFFMAN.

LETTERS OF CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The late Charles Willis Thompson, one time editor of the New York *Times* Book Review and a frequent writer for THE COMMONWEAL, left a wealth of literary material in the tens of thousands of letters that he wrote over a period of fifty years. He invariably made, but did not always keep, carbon copies, and these he corrected as meticulously as he did the originals before mailing.

Mrs. Mary Dawson Cain, editor of the Summit (Miss.) *Sun*, and I are engaged in selecting the most characteristic of these off-the-record epistles for inclusion in a volume or two. We shall promptly return to any of "Charlie's" correspondents any letters sent to us. As the tentative title of our collaboration is "To and From Charles Willis Thompson," we would also appreciate copies of letters sent *to* our friend.

All communications should be addressed to Lew Ney, Box 10, Station C, New York 14, N. Y.

LEW NEY.

GERTRUDE STEIN

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I am quite horrified and ashamed to discover that in my recent article on Gertrude Stein I credit her with "sensibly declaring that if the name of anything or of everything is dead, then the only way to keep it alive is to rename it." It was not Miss Stein but Mr. Julian Sawyer in his quite excellent "Gertrude Stein, a Biography" (Arrow Editions) who is the author of this remark. It is to Mr. Sawyer, too, that I owe the reference to Pareto—and I am very sorry I did not give honor where honor is due.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

The Stage & Screen

Made In Heaven

HAGAR WILDE'S small comedy is without question a skilful exercise in cliché. And, without question, the second-night audience laughed and loved it. An examination of suburban marital problems, the piece presents the usual man (advertising) leaving the usual wife and being left in turn; introduces the usual coincidental extra girl: offers a fillip by way of an ingenue who does NOT want to get married; and further exposes the usual problems of the usual country-club set. It's all plain, clean, and fairly funny; the only conundrum being, if life is as desperately empty as this in the outskirts of any town, why on earth want to share it with anyone? With the exception of Carmen Mathews's peculiarly jerky performance as the wife, I thought most of the acting plausible; Maurice Manson as the demolished version of a husband excellent. However, all of the dresses, done up by Elizabeth Arden among others, struck me as awkwardly strange. (*At the Henry Miller.*)

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The Playboy of the Western World

HERE'S A thankless job for a reviewer. Indeed it seems so impossible to make a fair division between gratitude to the producers and criticism of the performance, that one it tempted to go luke and deliver only a kind of ubiquitous laurel done up in a little history and lots of love. Nevertheless, prejudice being merely an occasional (?) fault of this column, rather than a principle, it seems to me right that the division should be tried.

As I understand it, Theatre Incorporated's system of Repertory is not more complex than conditions warrant, and adds up to something like this. Offering to a Name-Performer (in most cases probably a nostalgic Hollywood celebrity) the opportunity of an adequate run in a tried revival on Broadway, they hope by this method to gain sufficient funds for original experimental work. So far, in one season, their importation of London's Old Vic, amounting to history and sure prestige, plus their triumphant presentation of Gertrude Lawrence in "Pygmalion," would seem to point the method's success. On the other hand, their third offering (again a revival, *not* an experiment) rears some questions. And the first of these will have to do with their return to the now discarded Star arrangement. For, if their Star fails them, what is to be done? Is their chosen classic to be expected to carry him, when he is the large promotional excuse for its performance, when the work is more or less tailored to his size? And if he does fail them, what is to become of the new work held in abeyance for his dollars? The element of chance, perhaps the commercial theater's greatest attraction to its partizans, is here quite paradoxically overstressed. In attempting to be over-sure of one's results, it is only too possible, I think, to lose one's intention. As though, in knowing *all* the ropes, and trying to pull them all, one were only sure of being wholly hanged.

It is true this analysis will seem to lay all giant quibbles directly at Burgess Meredith's door. But I cannot see any way round this. Starring as Christy Mahon, in this rarest of the Synge stuff, he is poor, I think. Overemphasized, he drags the pace monotonously, hunches through the action, and most of all, since he seems incapable of delivering more than three words to a breath, entirely fails the flow of the poetry. However, seeing round him (if you can), I think it is possible to discover one or two startlingly good performances, a neat set and trapping by John Boyt, and, certainly, one of the delighting works of the western world. The plum (unfortunately not the star) of the evening must go to an imported young Irish actress, Eithne Dunne, as Pegeen Mike. I think there is little to say of her except that in voice, grace, sureness, feeling, in complete *inherence* in a most subtle rôle, she is perfect. Mildred Natwick's various Widow Quinn supports this excellence, as does the work of J. M. Kerrigan, Fred Johnson, and Dennis King, Jr., respectively the assorted fathers and village bobeen. For the rest, villagers, girls and drinking men, Guthrie McClintic's direction seemed exactly as one-dimensional as Mr. Meredith's.

In any revival in this country, it appears difficult to promote the play as the thing. Our advertising stupidities seem consistently to demand something extra: some new angle or gimmick. But perhaps, to employ paradox again, the newest possible gimmick has come round to being the real one, and any young working Repertory, experimental or otherwise, should now depends upon *plays* rather than a single so-called safe production and upon the development of *players* rather than the support of a name. (*At the Plymouth.*) KAPPO PHELAN.

The Nice Man Cometh

WHATEVER one may think of the quality of this week's comedies, one cannot complain that their themes lack variety. Somehow humor seems to have attached itself to subjects ranging from death to buttling, gambling and 1920's flappers.

Comedies with dead people in their list of characters have been seen before, so *"The Cockeyed Miracle"* comes as no shock—especially if one doesn't take its dabs of philosophy too seriously. The movie's main charm lies in the relationships between its two leading characters: elderly Sam Griggs (Frank Morgan), who dies shortly after the picture's beginning, and his father (Keenan Wynn), who died many years ago as a young man and returns to earth to guide Sam into the great beyond. Because his sudden death left so many loose ends in the Griggs household, Sam wants to hover around a while and straighten up a few things for his family. So the old "Son" and young "Pa" have a gay time that is right out of this world as they go about helping Sam's daughter (Audrey Totter) who can't make her shy beau pop the question, Sam's son (Marshall Thompson) who prefers building ships to packing fish, and Sam's devoted widow (Gladys Cooper) whose fine feeling of security after 43 years of happiness with her husband is endangered by Sam's venal ex-partner (Cecil Kellaway). The setting for these fantastic events is a quaint seaport town in Maine around the turn of the nineteenth century; and S. Sylvan Simon has nicely directed Karen De Wolf's script with a light touch. The acting is good throughout; and Wynn and Morgan are especially delightful as the two spirits who banter wisecracks as they go about their business. Of course there's nothing particularly reverent about this business or about Wynn's superior attitude as he tells off whining Morgan with: "Dead only a few minutes and complaining already!" But it's fun!

"White Tie and Tails" is about a man who likes to have nice things around, likes them so well, in fact, that he'd rather be a butler in a New York mansion than an artist (a profession for which he has some aptitude) in an attic. As a butler, he's one of those jewels who can fix everything from Martinis to bowties. BUT, while his employers vacation in Florida, this perfect butler gets all dressed up, goes out on the town, mingles with class. He falls for a wealthy girl (Ella Raines), rescues her sister from a gambler (William Bendix) and finds himself in the clutches of this smart business man who takes a Goya and Corot from the mansion where the butler works. Director Charles T. Barton makes no pretense that this is great comedy; but his cast is smooth, the lines

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are bright, and the make-believe situations are at least make believe for adults. As the hero, Dan Duryea is a pleasant departure from the handsome lads who usually play in this type of concoction, and certainly a much better actor. The script gets a little muddled when the girl makes cracks about the butler's job, but the picture's solution, which becomes obvious too early in the game, compromises so that any real butlers who see the film won't feel that their occupation has been belittled.

Professional gamblers may feel that their life's work comes in for a lot of ribbing in *"Lady Luck,"* but practically everything in this farce is treated rather lightly—even marriage. Its heroine (Barbara Hale) descends from a long line of gamblers (represented in the clever prologue by herself and Frank Morgan). In the present she's still trying to reform her grandfather (Morgan) and takes an added risk by marrying an ex-professional gambler (Robert Young). When she catches her husband rolling dice (in the film's funniest scene made hilarious through Teddy Hart's perfect portrait of a poor sport) she immediately starts divorce proceedings. Then the plot wanders through a maze of tables turned and who's fooling whom. General movie-goers may find that the humor in this piece hardly compensates for the feeble plot or the endless stream of lingo about cards, races, bookies and craps.

Morticians may get just a touch annoyed at the attitude toward one of their men in *"Margie,"* however they are probably accustomed to the slight standoffishness with which members of their profession are treated. Even they will have to admit that the scene in which the heroine, a high-school girl attractively played by Jeanne Crain, goes to her father's undertaking parlors is very funny. On the whole this film has many touches that put it well above the average comedy about post-adolescents. The script by Ruth McKenney and F. Hugh Herbert is amusing, and Henry King has directed it with feeling that goes deeper than just nostalgia for 1928 and such songs as "A Cup of Coffee, a Sandwich and You," "April Showers" and the title piece. The humor at times is a bit trying—but certainly not as tiresome as today's jokes about bobby-sockers.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Engaging Contradiction

JACOB BEAN

IN WASHINGTON at the Corcoran Gallery there is a bright and charming picture by John Sloan; around a table in a restaurant garden sit the poet Alan Seeger, the young Van Wyck Brooks, Sloan himself, his wife Dolly; and presiding at the head of the table, sketch-book in hand, sits the Irish painter, John Butler Yeats. This picture of Sloan's is one of the few documents of Yeats's long American visit. He had come to New York in 1908 and until his death here in 1922 lived at a small *pension* on West 29th Street kept by three French women, the Petitpas sisters. The sisters ran a little restaurant in the house, and here Yeats, the Patriarch of Petitpas, gathered about him some of the liveliest New Yorkers of the early part of this century. Seeger, Brooks, and the Sloans were regulars at Yeats's table; George Bellows, Padraic Colum, and John Quinn, that supremely enthusiastic patron and collector, often came.

Yeats was a professional painter, but he was neither a very good nor a very successful one. His loyal friends contended that he was the best of Victorian portraitists, but his portraits, although they are often well conceived and psychologically discerning, are hardly remarkable enough to substantiate this friendly praise. He was, after all, a contemporary of Sargent and Whistler. Throughout his life Yeats worked seriously at his painting and hoped year after year for the recognition and success that never came, but almost in spite of himself he won friends and fame for his ideas and talk about art. His pictures are forgotten now; his poems and plays—for he tried his hand at writing, too—are entirely unknown; and only a few of the friends who delighted in his conversation are alive. Chesterton called him "perhaps the best talker I ever knew"; Van Wyck Brooks said that his conversation was "all of human nature and flowed with every sort of engaging contradiction, with a wisdom that was by turns cheerful and tragic, and a folly that was always somehow wise"; and most of the men who heard him said as much. But the memory of Yeats did not live beyond these obituaries: he has been remembered simply as the father of his far greater son, William Butler Yeats.

Now Mr. Joseph Hone, an Irish critic known chiefly for his long biography of W. B. Yeats, has brought out a group of some two-hundred-and-fifty of John Butler Yeats's letters* and prefaced them with a brief memoir. Most of them are letters to his son Willie (William Butler); the rest are addressed to his daughters, Lily and Lolly (Elizabeth), to his second son, the painter Jack B. Yeats, and to his friends, Oliver Elton and John Quinn. Yeats wrote delightful letters, honest, intimate, full of polite passion. He wrote of painting and politics, friends and enemies; but in most of the letters to Willie he is primarily concerned with the nature of poetry and the relation of the poet to society. Since Yeats was a painter it seems, at first, odd that he should have been so constantly concerned with the problems of the poet. The explanation is simple: Yeats was a painter, but an unsuccessful one, while Willie was a poet and an enormously successful one. Years before Yeats came to America, his son had a reputation which far overshadowed his own limited fame as a portraitist, and Yeats's long stay in America seems to have been a consequence of the steady increase in Willie's fame. In Dublin Yeats had been the father of the reigning poet; in America he was accepted for himself. But Yeats was never angry or jealous. He recognized and adored his son's genius and came to participate almost vicariously in his art. Yeats took on the rôle of admiring and obedient disciple, always ready to submit to Willie's superior genius, while Willie, who seems to have been rather skeptical of his father's talents,

*J. B. Yeats: Letters to His Son W. B. Yeats and Others, 1869-1922. Edited with a Memoir by Joseph Hone and a Preface by Oliver Elton. Dutton. $4.00.

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became the stern and rather paternal master.

Now and then Yeats complained about this servitude. When Willie completely ignored a play that his father had sent to him for approval, Yeats in a letter to his daughter Lily protested, but rather apologetically, "Willie I know has a rather curious idea that he is an extraordinarily wise person and that I and everybody else are puppets to be moved hither and thither as his wisdom directs." For the most part, though, Yeats's admiration for Willie was uncritical to excess, and his notions about poetry seem to assume the axiomatic superiority of Willie's poetical principles.

All this might make it seem that Yeats's letters about poetry are no more than critical curiosities. Certainly they do not contain much remarkably original criticism and, further, are full of flagrant contradictions. Yeats never valued consistency very highly and once suggested that every man of sense should keep on hand a box of drugged cigars which he could instantly proffer to any man who dared to say, "Excuse me, sir, but what you are saying now is inconsistent with what you said earlier in the evening."

Yeats has presented his convictions about poetry in these letters with an admirable fervor and emotional clarity. William Butler Yeats's critical writings are so often obscured by the magical and theosophical doctrines which obsessed him that they are difficult guides to his verse, while the simplicity and directness of his father's letters make them excellent commentaries. Yeats gave a number of informal lectures on poetry while he was here in America and to read the letters is, in a way, to be present at one of these lectures and to hear him explain his ideas about poetry.

Yeats, the painter, gave to poetry a vast and extravagant importance. "The world will not be right," he says, "till poetry is pronounced to be life itself, our life but its shadow and poor imitation." This is an excess of estheticism of which not even Pater or Wilde were guilty, but it follows easily enough upon Yeats's conviction that the esthetical is the sole foundation of society. Man, he contended, should obey no voice except that of emotion, and the voice of emotion is most completely and perfectly heard in poetry. To Yeats the poet is the most human and most sincere of men. Thus he defines the function of poetry in a fantastic procession of passionate superlatives, but fails to offer definitions of poetry itself which are more specific than: "Poetry concerns itself with the creation of Paradises." Van Wyck Brooks reports that nothing annoyed Yeats so much as to be pressed for a definition.

"Poetry is what really matters," he once wrote to Willie, "it holds the place that religion held and is Queen of the Sciences." Yeats's glorification of poetry is epitomized in this remark, and in it the extent of his error and confusion is revealed. Some thirty years before Matthew Arnold had announced that "most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry." At least in point of time, the confusion was not original with Yeats. Arnold had made the contention as part of a general attack on historic Christianity to which he had opposed "Culture," an idol of his own creation. Yeats, on the other hand, seems to have confused the proper provinces of art and religion as a consequence of his own ignorance about religion.

Yeats's father and grandfather before him had been beneficed clergy of the Established Church in Ireland, and until he left Trinity College, Dublin, in 1857, he had been expected to take up the same career. As an undergraduate he studied Bishop Butler's "Analogy of Religion" and, disconcerted, decided that he could not accept any of the supernatural elements in the Christian religion. Then for a time he was influenced by John Stuart Mill and became an argumentative liberal and humanitarian, but by the end of the 60's he had set himself up as a painter and was in all things pre-Raphaelite. Pre-Raphaelite estheticism, an extension and exaggeration of the doctrines of Arnold and Pater, served as a springboard for Yeats. He gave to art and most particularly to poetry, for him the purest of all the arts, all the supernatural attributes and powers which he had denied to religion. He was convinced that Tyndall and Huxley had destroyed supernatural religion, but nonetheless he created what his son called "a new religion, an almost infallible church of poetic tradition, of a fardel of stories, and of personages, and of emotions, inseparable from their first expression, passed on from generation to generation by poets and painters with some help from philosophers and theologians."

There is a good deal of outright embarrassing philosophical confusion in these letters—Yeats was hardly a success as a systematic critic—but the delightful intimacy of his style and the consistent excellence of his taste would recommend them to anyone who is like Yeats in loving literature for its own sake. Yeats's enthusiasm is contagious, and this is certainly the best thing that can be said of any critical writing. George Saintsbury once described criticism as "an amorous quest of literary beauty and a rapturous enjoyment of it." An excellent definition, certainly, and one which gives Yeats a high place among critics.

Recent Catholic Books

SO MUCH ink and paper have been expended on the subject of what constitutes a Catholic novel that we shall not go into it here. It is sufficient to remark that in recent months several rather distinguished works of fiction by Catholic authors and dealing with life as a Catholic sees it have been published in this country. "Joy," by Georges Bernanos (Pantheon, $2.75), was published in France a number of years ago and deals in violent fashion with a saintly young woman surrounded by the forces of evil. In contrast, the heroine of the more recent "Woman of the Pharisees," by François Mauriac (Holt, $2.50), shows what evil a woman beset by pride can do despite her most strenuous claims to Christian virtue. How different is the manner in which "The Quiet Man," by Patrick Purcell (Putnam, $2.50), reflects the tranquil charm of rural Ireland. "Yellow Tapers for Paris," by Bruce Marshall (Houghton, $2.50), is a tract in novel form on the demoralization which had pervaded all ranks

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of French society by the time Hitler invaded Poland. It is pretty grim. Kate O'Brien's "For One Sweet Grape" (Doubleday, $2.75), is a painstaking and beautifully written study of a remarkable woman who was a friend of Spain's Philip II, her illicit liaison and her long years of punishment and repentance.

Among the books dealing with the saints in one way or another are the following: "The Incarnation of the Word of God," by Saint Athanasius (Macmillan, $1.50); "The Life and Kingdom of Jesus," by Saint John Eudes (Kenedy, $3.00); "The Sacred Heart of Jesus," by Saint John Eudes (Kenedy, $2.00); "Cicero in the Courtroom of Saint Thomas Aquinas," by E. K. Rand (Marquette University Press, $2.50). And worthy of special mention is publication for the first time in America of Evelyn Waugh's "Edmund Campion" (Little, $2.75). An heroic pioneer, although not canonized by the Church, is "Claude Dubuis: Bishop of Galveston," whose first, incomplete biography is written by L. V. Jacks (Herder, $2.50).

Some of the most interesting of the recent volumes deal with apologetics. For personal accounts of conversions there are: "A Testimonial to Grace," by Avery Dulles (Sheed, $1.50), reviewed elsewhere in this issue, and "Slow Dawning," by Jane Howes (Herder, $3.00), which sketchily recounts her progress difficulty by difficulty, step by step. Of special note are three general books:

"Whereon to Stand," by John Gilland Brunini (Harper, $3.00), reviewed in this issue.

"Truths Men Live By," by John A. O'Brien (Macmillan, $2.75), which has been widely recognized as generally good, popular apologetics.

"Christianity," by Joseph H. Fichter (Herder, $2.50)—a concise outline of dogmatic theology for laymen somewhat on the dry and academic side, by a talented young American Jesuit.

"The Mysteries of Christianity," by Matthias Joseph Scheeben, translated by Cyril Vollert (Herder, $7.50), brings to American readers a monumental treatise which in its German form enjoyed the greatest renown.

"The Messias," by Joseph Pickl (Herder, $4.00), reviewed in this issue.

Several volumes intended for spiritual reading must also be included. "The Love of God," by Andrew Green (Herder, $2.50), is a useful guide, so methodical that at times it seems to lack warmth, by a Benedictine well versed in the scholastic method. "Darkness Is Passed," by Thomas H. Moore (Declan X. McMullen, $2.00), is reviewed in this issue. Then there is the volume "The Epistles and Gospels for Sundays and Holy Days," translated by Ronald A. Knox (Sheed, $2.50).

Several volumes must be mentioned in a final catch-all paragraph. Hilaire Belloc's "The Servile State" has been recently published for the first time in this country (Holt, $2.50). It is the classic critique of capitalism and the state from the viewpoint of the English Distributists; and to compare Mr. Belloc's dire predictions of thirty years ago with what has happened since is worth doing. "Essay in Reconstruction," edited by Dom Ralph Russell (Sheed, $2.50), is reviewed in this issue. For those interested in the last days of the religious plays of the Middle Ages, there is "Mysteries End," by Harold C. Gardiner (Yale, $3.00). "Under the Red Sun," by Forbes Monaghan (Declan X. McMullen, $2.75), tells of the heroism of the Filipinos during the war, particularly of his own pupils from the Jesuit Ateneo. It is a companion piece to the warmly received, "Guerrilla Padre in Mindanao," by Edward Haggerty, S.J. (Longmans. $2.75.)

Whereon to Stand. John Gilland Brunini. Harper. $3.00.

ALMOST ANY man or woman or child who lives with some sort of "ideology," from time to time feels baffled and inarticulate when he comes to the point of describing what his ideology actually is. Nearly everyone, also, finds himself once in a while pressing and impatient when he really and sincerely wants somebody with a declared "viewpoint" to expound the viewpoint and that person just can't get started, or else, getting started, goes right off on some special angle leaving the inquirer in despair of seeing what the whole thing is about.

The Catholic religion of all "ideologies" is the most comprehensive. Aside from the truth of its claims, it has obviously been built up and worked over by more people over a longer period of time; been directed to more phases of human life and consciousness; been studied and written about more; it has been more totally "lived" by a greater number and a more remarkable group of persons than any other identifiable "world outlook" in history. This creates an enormous problem of communication, both for the one not a Catholic who seeks some sort of a description of what his Catholic neighbor has in mind, and for the Catholic who wants to begin to tell what it is he believes and thinks and feels about *everything*.

John Brunini's book, "Whereon to Stand," breaks through the barrier of inarticulateness and establishes a good and reasonable and clear lane of communication between those outside the Catholic religion and those inside. It starts the conversation, the description in an altogether remarkable manner. Almost as welcome is the service the book renders one Catholic and another, setting forth our Faith and morality and practice in intelligent, brief terms: an exposition everywhere clear and everywhere furnishing a solid basis for orderly and creative conversation and development.

"Whereon to Stand" does very much very well—in America's language today, and almost surely for a long time, the best exposition and representation of basic "Faith and practice"—because it is conceived clearly and is kept with most pleasing discipline to the definite pattern. The conception appears to be rigidly exclusive. It positively does not involve a "justification" of the Faith, nor a "justification" of the metaphysics associated with our theology, and it does not pretend to preach Catholicism to converted or unconverted, or to argue with or "missionize" the man outside. The question this book answers is the very practical one and the very common one: "So you are a Catholic. . . . Well, just what does that mean you believe, and what do you do about it? Go ahead; tell me as briefly and as clearly as you can, in over-all but definite terms which reasonable and practical men can talk about."

John Brunini accepts the question as a fitting and decent one, and is not in the least floored by it. His answer is straight-forward, always good tempered and warm, never ironic or condescending—a sincere and loyal answer and amazingly informed, and, how agreeably, well written. In 288 pages, in 33 brief chapters, the whole round circle of the horizon is observed, the compass boxed with accu-

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rate nomenclature, and, perhaps best of all, innumerable points along the way are quickly penetrated to show the endless reaches lying everywhere behind our limited immediate sight, deeper than a first explanatory description. The chapter titles start "Where Unaided Reason Ranges" and carry on to consideration of "How Fares the Ideal?" They do not, however, usually indicate the logical development of the exposition and they have a different, "higher" rhetoric and style which is less attractive than the chapters they label. The twelfth chapter is called "The Meshing of Mysteries," and that might point one distinction of the whole book: the elements of our Faith and morality, the Bible, Catholic worship, the rôle of priest and laity, Catholic tradition, ecclesiastical institutions—the parts and signs that must come to mind in telling what the Church is—are put forward without confusion, thing by thing, but fitted all together in a complete impression, demonstrated to be a unified whole.

The book is reasonable, carefully non-eccentric, and carefully objective. No man is so catholic that in his personal holding of a religion, or his personal interest in it, there are not subjective concentrations of interest and inclination and probably of love in special phases, areas, or truths within the whole. "Whereon to Stand" is remarkably free of subjective bias toward one part rather than another, but there is a still definitely livening quality in it, which may be of bridled strain against the framework of temperate, "non-mystical" exposition. It has a "lift" throughout because, perhaps, a reader sees and feels that the terms described are not only the parts of an historic religious equation, but also the objectified words and terms a man, and generations of men, are using to present and penetrate charity and life.

Each believing man must of course create his own description and apologia of his faith, but that in addition to his recognition of the objective way things are. For a particular Catholic, "Whereon to Stand" may seem to dwell too little for his subjective interest on one or another mystery or aspect of our religion: on the liturgy and prayer, perhaps; on mysticism in all; on analysis of emotion in will, in prayer, in love; on the social aspects of justice, and the relation of justice to charity; or on Catholic philosophies. Mr. Brunini's book holds carefully to its particular, objective job and completes it excellently. One of its high qualities is presenting definitions and mysteries and truths and their "meshing" which call for more and more studying and musing and speculation.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

The Messias. Rev. Josef Pickl. Herder. $4.00.

THOUGH not above criticism in many details, and even in basic assumptions, this study is by far one of the most stimulating and significant works of recent years in the field of Gospel interpretation. Upon its appearance in Germany in 1935, it occasioned a world of comment, to which reference should have been made in the translator's preface. Reading through the old reviews again today, one is struck by the strain that runs through friend and foe alike: that the book is extraordinarily suggestive with much to teach even the hostile critic.

The author's thesis is that we have paid far too little attention to the struggle for freedom that stirred Palestine during the lifetime of our Lord. From his own experiences in the Balkans in World War I, he has recon-

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The Month of the Poor Souls

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It is an ancient and pious practice among our Catholic people to make offerings for the poor souls in aid of charity. We shall be glad to be almoners for all our friends who wish to make offerings in aid of the poor souls.

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structed an atmosphere of constant agitation on the part of guerrilla bands against the galling yoke of Rome. He has entered into the mentality of the times, has depicted the Messianic hope that lived in the hearts of the people, has shown the difference in outlook among Sadducee and Pharisee and Freedom Party. His work thus becomes a blend of many things, of psychology, of politics, of exegesis, but it does catch again the turbulent world wherein the Christ of God lived out His life.

Familiar names enter into this story with unfamiliar connections. The Apostles are made very human, sharing the same hopes and prejudices as other men in Galilee. And the two thieves who die with Our Lord are painted as patriots rather than bandits while Barabbas becomes something of a national hero and the rival of Him whom the populace reject. You will not agree with all the exegesis and you will note that some of the fundamental interpretations are pure conjecture (though not at all improbable), but it will be many a day before you will find again so intelligible an account of the trial of the Messias or so realistic a portrayal of the last hours.

This present English version is quite competently done, perhaps heavily in spots. Yet it seems to have been made upon the first rather than the second German edition which this reviewer had at hand. Not all the critical studies of the original have been included, among them one on the census under Cyrinus. Unfortunately, too, the many references to Josephus in the first part of the book have been largely dropped out in translation so that the American reader never gets to perceive how thoroughly the author has utilized his sources.

HENRY G. J. BECK.

Best Sermons, 1946. Edited by G. Paul Butler. Harper. $2.75.

OUT OF 5,674 manuscripts submitted, the editor and his advisory committee have compiled this annual which comprises 52 sermons by as many clergymen of 18 denominations. Admittedly the selection gives permanency to a good deal of distinguished preaching. And though each will have his favorites, there is at least enough to go around for every type of taste, with something more to spare. It need not be said that the theology of the volume varies with the preacher. What the dogmatic Christian will note in several of the sermons is the absence of a clear-cut credal basis; their theme is theistic rather than specifically Christian. Of the discourses herein contained, three set forth a Jewish and nine a Catholic view; of these latter, five mirror the mind of the universities and three that of the episcopate so that in the main the Catholic parochial pulpit passes without representation.

HENRY G. J. BECK.

A Testimonial to Grace. Avery Dulles. Sheed. $1.50.

LIKE THE convivial soul who maintains that there is no such thing as bad whiskey, I would defend the thesis that every convert-story is worth reading. The path to Rome has been well trod for many centuries, and yet every new arrival seems to have found facets of interest and beauty along the way that previous wayfarers have missed. Mr. Dulles's account of his journey from unbelief to faith is no exception. His was almost entirely an intellectual pilgrimage, with no Catholic contacts to serve as guide-posts until he was well within sight of the shrine of Truth. I found particularly interesting the author's summarization of the doctrinal bankruptcy of

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the various non-Catholic churches wherein he sought surcease from his hunger for certitude. Another point well made by Mr. Dulles is the fact that the classic proofs for the existence of God are, in practice, persuasive rather than demonstrative. Valid as such proofs are in theory, it remains true that in real life there are no utterly detached and perfectly balanced minds poised for judgment. The painful renunciation of error must already be well in progress before the force of the historic proofs—from cause, design, motion, and law—is felt. "A Testimonial to Grace" has the ring of sincerity which is characteristic of such accounts. The style is a bit pedestrian, due perhaps to the author's evident shyness in discussing publicly what touches him deeply. LEO J. TRESE.

The Darkness Is Passed. Thomas H. Moore, S.J. Declan X. McMullen. $2.00.

IT IS IN the nature of the case that book reviewing should be largely a subjective business. Whether a book is typographically beautiful, whether the writer is an authority on his subject, whether he has an adequate command of the vernacular—such minor points as these are quickly disposed of by established norms. But to the great over-all question: will people like this book; will they find it instructive, or helpful, or entertaining; this question the reviewer approaches in fear and trembling as he turns his eyes inward and essays the rôle of Everyman. For this reason I should like to mention that "The Darkness Is Passed," a volume of 26 informal meditations on the Christian Life, has been made a selection of the Spiritual Book Associates. That means that competent critics have judged it profitable reading. Since they have liked it, undoubtedly others will. But to me it seems that the many excellent thoughts in Father Moore's book are too disjointedly expressed, moving almost with a jerkiness that keeps the mind from fastening fruitfully on any one idea—which is the aim of meditation. The themes are too diffusive to leave the reader with any practical conclusions. I can readily imagine that these meditations, if spoken to a group of women in the reverent atmosphere of a retreat chapel, would be found both charming and inspirational. But reduced to the cold rigidity of the printed page, their effectiveness is lost. For two dollars one can make a choice of so many better books of spiritual aid—yet it is a field of literature where judgments are most subjective of all. LEO J. TRESE.

The Monastery. F. Majdalany. Houghton. $2.00.

SAINT BENEDICT'S Abbey on Monte Cassino is the backdrop for Major Majdalany's "film" of the British military actions surrounding that memorable mountain—memorable for monastic culture and for the recent destruction visited on it as a dangerous nazi outpost. The enemy had been shrewd in converting this cradle of monks, so "high and lifted up," into a formidable fortress; they thus held, for six months, the control of Highway VI leading northward through mountainous terrain to Rome.

There are unforgettable characters—Harry the meticulous philosopher of gunnery; Miles, who liked mules as mules liked Miles; Sergeant Mucky, whose daily letters to his wife in Wigan sometimes piled up as many as six before they could get sent. There are the unspeakable horrors of infested dugouts; there are the humorous moments centered around Horace: the eight-inch howitzer

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ISOLATING GERMANY, by Murray Ballantyne, is a vigorous protest against the British and American policies of keeping printed matter originating in this country and the British Isles from reaching the Germans and vice versa. Mr. Ballantyne, editor of the *Canadian Register*, substantiates these charges by quoting verbatim the AMG rules and by referring to his own recent experiences in Germany. He raises the question in no mistakable terms: How can we expect the Germans to develop democratic sentiments when we cut off absolutely so basic a form of communication of ideas with the Anglo-Saxon world?

CHILDREN'S BOOKS 1946, by Harry Lorin Binsse, is the annual critical survey by types and age groups of the American publishers' juvenile titles for the fall and Christmas seasons. A readable catalogue which will serve as an invaluable guide for Christmas giving.

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loaned by the Americans, planted out in no-man's-land, trained on the Monastery, and fired by remote control from Harry's dugout—a constant joy to Harry, this Horace, and a booster of company morale. Then there is the ceaseless hammering of the enemy in the Monastery, followed by a slight edging forward, more casualties, bogging down, waiting, grousing, sticking at it.

Like the slow advance of Fate the British, Poles, and Americans finally but surely seal off Monastery Hill: from a fortress it becomes a death trap. And typical is the Britisher's conclusion: "The job was done." There is a quality in this book seldom reached by ordinary war reporting: the generosity and humanity of the good soldier. The narrative is gripping, but what grips most is the soul of the fighting man.

RICHARD FLOWER.

Essays in Reconstruction. Dom Ralph Russell, O.S.B., editor. Sheed. $2.50.

THE PURPOSE of this volume is best expressed in one of its ten essays, "Catholics and Economic Reconstruction." There Michael Fogarty writes:

> If there is to be any hope of a return to positive Christian belief, it is essential that there should exist in each field of knowledge a body of technically satisfactory doctrine worked out in Christian terms, by which developments in each field can be linked on to the main Christian tradition—a body of knowledge whose quality will be respected by technical experts and will attract their attention, and which at the same time will be fully consistent with Christianity.

Fields covered, in addition to economics, are: man as a human individual with a supernatural destiny, Catholic Action, Education, Science, Literature, Philosophy, and the function which Catholic youth must serve.

Because of the high philosophic plane upon which each of the essays has been undertaken and carried through, they may be read with interest and profit by Americans as well as Britons. A possible exception to this general speculative tone is the essay already mentioned—and that essay should be of interest in view of His Majesty's present form of government.

Whereas ours is an age of action and the post-war world seemed to cry out for nothing so much as immediate action, Dom Russell and his associates recognize the need of sober thought, of contemplation, of the creation of an intellectual and apostolic élite, which should go forth to the work of restoring all things in Christ. Slight as it is, their volume can serve as a source of orientation in the various fields of modern life which so desperately need the Christian and Catholic leaven. *Nemo dat quod non habet.*

MARK BARRON.

CONTRIBUTORS

Rev. H. A. REINHOLD, Pastor of Sunnyside, Wash., is the author of "The Soul Afire," a leader of the liturgical movement, columnist in *Orate Fratres* and a brilliant contributor to many Catholic periodicals.

Rev. Charles Owen RICE is the Director of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality in Pittsburgh and is also OPA rent director for that city and Director of the Labor-Management Relations Institute of Duquesne University. In the strike described Father Rice served as radio commentator for the Pittsburgh area radio stations.

Rev. Henry G. J. BECK teaches at the seminary of the Archdiocese of Newark at Darlington, N. J.

Rev. Leo J. TRESE is pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Carleton, Mich.

Rev. Richard FLOWER, O.S.B., is a teacher and member of the Community of Saint Gregory's Priory, Portsmouth, R. I.

Rev. Mark BARRON, O.P., is a member of the Dominican Community in Madison, Wis., and is a professor at Edgewood College.

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